Professor Gregory B. McKenna

Subsequent to receiving his Bachelor's degree in Engineering Mechanics at the U.S. Air Force Academy, Gregory B. McKenna went on to MIT where, in 1971, he earned a Masters Degree in the area of composite materials before entering on active duty as a test and evaluation engineer at Hill Air Force Base in Ogden, Utah. While in Utah, he completed his higher education by earning a Ph.D. in Materials Science and Engineering at the University of Utah in 1976. Dr. McKenna then moved to the then National Bureau of Standards as a National Research Council Postdoc and accepted a permanent position as a staff scientist at the then National Bureau of Standards (NBS) (now the National Institute of Standards and Technology, NIST) in 1977. Since then, Dr. McKenna has earned a reputation as a pioneering researcher in four major areas of polymer and plastics science and technology: Physical Aging and Structural Recovery of Polymer Glasses, Solid Mechanics and Nonlinear Viscoelasticity of Polymers, Thermodynamics and Mechanics of Elastomers and Gels, Molecular Rheology. He was the head of the Structure and Mechanics Group in the Polymers Division at NIST from August 1992 until July 1999 when he took the position of Professor in the Department of Chemical Engineering and John R. Bradford Endowed Chair in Engineering at Texas Tech University. In 2005 he became a Paul Whitfield Horn Professor at TTU. Dr. McKenna has been a Fellow of the American Physical Society since 1989 and was elected a Fellow of the Society of Plastics Engineers in 1998. He received a U.S. Department of Commerce Bronze Medal in 1985 and a Silver Medal in 1992. He was the recipient of the E.U. Condon Award of the National Institute of Standards and Technology for excellence in technical exposition in 1989 for his classic review article "Glass Formation and Glassy Behavior." He is the 2009 recipient of the Bingham Medal of the Society of Rheology and has also received the International Award of the Society of Plastics Engineers and the Mettler Toledo Award from the North American Thermal Analysis Society. Dr. McKenna has served on the Governing Board of the American Institute of Physics, the Executive Committees of the Society of Rheology and The Division of High Polymer Physics (DHPP) of the American Physical Society. He has also served as the Chairman of the DHPP, the Society of Engineering Science, and the Polymer Analysis Division of the Society of Plastics Engineers. He is currently vice-president of the Society of Rheology.